

GOVERNING BODY OF THE BELFAST METROPOLITAN COLLEGE		
Minutes of the HR Committee meeting held on 22 November 2017 at 4.30pm in TQ campus boardroom		
Present	Present Governors: Catherine Burns (Chair), Jim McCall, and Sam Snodden. Officers: Gillian Magee, [Director of Transition], Darren Crothers (Head of HR), and Rebecca Roberts (Head of Excellence). Secretary: John McAndrew	
HR 21 17/18	Apologies and Notice of AOB	
	Apologies were received from Brian Wilson and Maureen Walkingshaw. There was one item of AOB [See Minute 36 17/18].	
HR 22 17/18	Conflicts of Interest Declaration	
	In response to the Chair's question no conflicts were declared.	
HR 23 17/18	Minutes of the HR Committee meeting of 20 September 2017	
	The minutes of the 20 September 2017 were agreed.	
HR24 17/18	Matters Arising (and actions taken)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>RES 1 Stephen Kennedy to return in September 2018 . Scheduled.</i> • <i>RES 2 Rebecca Roberts to update Committee on the Centre for Excellence at a future meeting. See Minute31 17/18. Complete.</i> • <i>RES 3 Update on the appraisal review process at the November 2017 HR meeting. See Minute30 17/18. Complete.</i> • <i>RES 4 Assurance Statement to be amended and circulated to members for comments. See Minute33 17/18.</i> • <i>RES 5 Recommendations from the GB Review Committee. Secretary to complete relevant sections to ensure completeness. Complete.</i> • <i>RES 6 Terms of Reference to be amended and circulated to members for comments. See Minute 34 17/18.</i> • <i>RES 7 Policy refresher training dates to be identified and hardcopy policy files compiled. Complete.</i> 	
HR 25 17/18	Chair's Business	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pre- Meeting</i>The Chair noted that she had met the Director of Transition prior to the Committee meeting. • <i>Training</i>The Chair noted that the Personnel Policy refresher training had taken place on November 2 2017 and had been well attended. She thanked HR Officers Crothers and Smith for their presentations. 	
HR 26 17/18	HR Priorities	
	<p>The Head of HR updated members on progress against planned priorities and highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Planned activities.</i> These were largely on track despite HR Department being below complement. On enquiry the pros and cons of using Agency staff were discussed. • <i>Sickness absence level.</i> This was at 2.59% for end of Q1 2017=18 which was the lowest ever recorded. On enquiry it was confirmed that the reasons were as yet undetermined. • <i>College Re-organisation.</i> HR, and Marketing had been signed off by the Executive and Business Development was awaiting sign off. • <i>FE Sector initiatives</i> Sector wide initiatives were increasing HR workloads 	

	<p>particularly at HHR level.</p> <p>The DT noted the completion of an internal Staff Survey with a 60% plus response rate equally divided between Academic and Support staff.</p> <p>Members noted that all activities in the operating plan were at green.</p>	
RES 7	<i>The HR Committee agreed that a presentation on the recent Staff Survey be made at the next HR Committee meeting in February 2018.</i>	DT
HR 2717/18	HR Metrics	
	<p>The Head of HR introduced the HR Metrics paper and highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Establishment figures.</i> In Q1 2017/18 there were 999 staff (771FTE). • <i>Sickness Absence.</i> Year on year improvements in Q1 were noted. On enquiry it was confirmed that sickness absence statistics were discretely categorised, and that musculo-skeletal conditions figured prominently in all Colleges and in other organisations. • <i>Turnover.</i> It was noted that turnover was relatively low for an organisation the size of Belfast Met. • <i>Utilisation.</i> An average of 95% utilization across the 5 Schools. • <i>Employee Relations cases.</i> On enquiry it was confirmed that there were significant associated costs and disruptions arising from processing grievance cases and it was agreed that early intervention and mediation were highly beneficial. 	
HR 28 17/18	HR Policies & Procedures	
	<p>The Head of HR highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Whistleblowing Policy.</i> Due to changes in legislation from October 2017, the policy has been subject to minor revisions. • <i>Interim Capability Policy for Academic Staff.</i> Following consultation this was awaiting sign off. • <i>Resourcing Policy.</i> Discussions were ongoing with the Equality Commission in relation to recruitment practices. 	
RES 8	<i>The HR Committee recommended approval of the BMC Whistleblowing policy to the Governing Body.</i>	Chair
HR 29 17/18	VES, Restructuring and Recruitment	
	<p>The Head of HR highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sector VES scheme.</i> The College was not operating VES in 2017/18. • <i>Recruitment.</i> It was noted that the College had moved to colour advertisements which would be reviewed once the impact had been quantified. In Q1 67 posts had been advertised with 526 applications received; in the same period there were 94 new starts. 	
HR 30 17/18	Appraisals	
	<p>The Head of Excellence noted the differing arrangements for academic and support staff appraisals, the transfer of responsibility for appraisals from HR to the Centre for Excellence, the absence of appraisals of academic staff in 2016/17 and an interim process in 2017/18. The new academic observations and appraisal cycle would commence in June 2018.</p> <p>In regard to the interim process for academic staff all of the CAMs had signed off on lists to schedule observation and feedback between November 2017 and February 2018 (with further dates in April and May as contingency for</p>	

	<p>absentees). Extra resource was to be directed to areas where CAMs had large staff lists. In regard to support staff all processes were going well.</p> <p>On enquiry it was confirmed that 1 unsatisfactory assessment for academic staff would result in a referral to the CfE, and a second to a referral to HR. It was also confirmed that to date there had been no negative impact on employer relation statistics.</p>	
HR 31 17/18	Centre for Excellence	
	<p>The Head of Excellence highlighted:</p> <p><i>Inspection.</i> The range of work being undertaken in advance of inspections for both QAA and ETI.</p> <p><i>Academic conference at Spring half term.</i> This would specifically look at quality standards.</p> <p><i>Accredited Level 4 Teaching.</i> Members noted the reactions of interested parties to the in house bespoke scheme directed at improving the quality of P/T lecturer teaching.</p> <p><i>Graduations.</i> The Chair praised the clockwork organisation behind the highly successful Graduation ceremonies.</p> <p><i>ILM levels.</i> The addition of a “Moving into Management “ qualification at ILM Level 3 following successful ILM courses at level 5 and 7 was noted. On enquiry it was confirmed that staff undergoing the above were granted facility time.</p>	
HR 32 17/18	Equality	
	<p>The Head of HR highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Article 55.</i> The return for the period 2014-2016 was due to be submitted to the Equality Commission by end November 2017 and the report would be subsequently released to HR Committee. • <i>Equality and Good Relations Duties’ Report.</i> The yearly progress report had been submitted to the Equality Commission. <p>The Chair advised that this report would normally be presented to the Committee at the September meeting and asked that it be made available to the GB on request.</p>	
HR 33 17/18	Annual HR Assurance Statement	
	<p>The draft Assurance Statement was discussed and the Chair sought revised wording to reflect that HR were providing assurances to the HR Committee on behalf of the Governing Body. This should in the format of compliance and evidence, or explanations for non-compliance.</p>	
RES 9	<p><i>The HR Committee asked that HR revisit the wording of the Draft Assurance Statement in paras 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.12, and 1.14 with a view to circulating an agreed document in time for the Governing Body of 7December 2017.</i></p>	HHR
HR 34 17/18	Terms of Reference	
	<p>The draft Terms of Reference were discussed and the Secretary was asked to populate the Quarterly Agendas.</p>	
RES 10	<p><i>The HR Committee asked that the Secretary revisit the wording of the draft TOR with a view to circulating an agreed document in time for the Governing Body of 7 December 2017.</i></p>	Secretary
HR 35 17/18	Recommendations from the GB Review Committee	
	<p>The Director of Transition provided members with an update on progress. The</p>	

	Chair sought detail on the communication protocol, noting the need for clear direction as to the need for the correct tone in correspondence, and also sought detail on procedural flow charts. The Secretary was asked to provide details of relevant correspondence to HR, and the DT sought approval for flowcharting procedures on a case by case basis as each policy was reviewed, the disciplinary procedures for Teaching and Support staff had already been completed.	Secretary
RES 11	<i>The HR Committee agreed that flowcharts for personnel procedures be completed on an individual basis as each policy comes up for review.</i>	Secretary
HR 36 17/18	AOB: Catering Review	
	<p>The Director of Transition advised members that the College was reviewing its catering provision and that initial conversations had been had with staff. [This item was the subject of a paper in Resources Committee. JMCA]</p> <p>The Chairman paid tribute to Darren Crothers, Head of HR who was leaving the organisation in the near future. She thanked him for his contribution to the Committee over the past two years and wished him every success in the future.</p>	
HR 37 17/18	Date of Next Meeting	
	The next meeting will be held on 21 February 2018.	
HR 38 17/18	Close of Meeting evaluation:	
	"A good positive meeting."	